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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 14-20 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, Applicant amends Claims 14 and 17.

Claim 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for allegedly being indefinite. Applicant has amended Claim 17 to correct the informalities noted by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 14-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakai (U.S. 2001/0026435) in view of Murai et al. (U.S. 6,285,116) and Alcoe (U.S. 7,087,846). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections of Claims 14-20.

Claim 14 has been amended to recite:

A manufacturing method for a laminated ceramic electronic component, comprising the steps of:

screen printing a coil conductor pattern having a first land at one end of the coil conductor pattern and a second land at the other end of the coil conductor pattern on the surface of a ceramic sheet having a hole for a via hole formed therein by using a conductive material such that the first land covers the hole for via hole;

simultaneously filling the conductive material in the hole for the via hole during the step of screen printing the coil conductor pattern; and

laminating a plurality of ceramic sheets such that the first land in one of the plurality of ceramic sheets is directly and electrically connected to the second land in another of the plurality of ceramic sheets through the via hole formed in the one of the plurality of ceramic sheets to obtain a laminate; wherein

an area of the via hole is less than an area of the first land and an area of the second land; and

the area of the second land is greater than the area of the first land.

The Examiner alleged that Sakai teaches all of the features recited in Applicant's Claim 14, except for the features of (1) simultaneously filling the conductive material in the hole during the step of screen printing the coil conductor pattern; and (2) the area of the second land is larger than the area of the first land. The Examiner further alleged that Murai et al. teaches the feature of simultaneously filling the conductive material in

the hole during the step of screen printing the coil conductor pattern, and that Alcoe teaches the feature of the area of the second land is larger than the area of the first area.

Thus, the Examiner concluded that it would have been obvious “to simultaneously [fill] the conductive material in the hole while screen printing the coil conductor pattern as taught by Murai et al. in the electronic device of Sakai, in order to simplify and speed up the process of the electronic device,” and “to use a larger second land for a conductor as taught by Alcoe in the electronic device of Sakai, in order to connect to larger size via hole, and in order to be able to allow slight variations in alignment of the via with the land when the layers [are] laminated together.”

Applicant's Claim 14 has been amended to recite the feature of “laminating a plurality of ceramic sheets such that the first land in one of the plurality of ceramic sheets is directly and electrically connected to the second land in another of the plurality of ceramic sheets through the via hole formed in the one of the plurality of ceramic sheets to obtain a laminate.” Support this feature is found, for example, in paragraph [0030] of Applicant's originally filed Substitute Specification and in Figs. 1 and 3 of Applicant's originally filed drawings.

The Examiner acknowledged that Sakai and Murai et al. fail to teach or suggest the feature of “the area of the second land is greater than the area of the first land” as recited in Applicant's Claim 14. Thus, Sakai and Murai et al. clearly fail to teach or suggest the features of “laminating a plurality of ceramic sheets such that the first land in one of the plurality of ceramic sheets is directly and electrically connected to the second land in another of the plurality of ceramic sheets through the via hole formed in the one of the plurality of ceramic sheets to obtain a laminate,” wherein “the area of the second land is greater than the area of the first land” as recited in Applicant's Claim 14.

The Examiner alleged that Alcoe teaches the feature of a conductor pattern 15 that includes a first land 29 and a second land 25 at opposed ends of the conductor pattern 15, wherein the area of the second land 25 is greater than the area of the first land 29. However, as shown in Figs. 1A and 2A of Alcoe, the first land 29 of the

conductor pattern 15 is directly and electrically connected by the via hole 19 to the first land of the conductor pattern 15'. That is, at best, Alcoe teaches the feature of laminating a plurality of ceramic sheets such that **the first land 29 of the conductor pattern 15 having an area smaller than an area of the second land 25** in one of the plurality of ceramic sheets is directly and electrically connected to **the first land of the conductor pattern 15' having an area smaller than an area of the second land** in another of the plurality of ceramic sheets through the via hole 19 formed in the one of the plurality of ceramic sheets to obtain a laminate.

Alcoe fails to teach or suggest that the first land 29 could or should be directly and electrically connected to a second land of the conductor pattern 15, which has an area greater than that of the first land, through the via hole 19. Instead, in each embodiment of Alcoe that allegedly includes a first land and a second land that has an area greater than that of the first land, the first land in one ceramic layer is always directly and electrically connected to the first land in another ceramic layer, and is never directly connected to the second land.

Thus, Alcoe clearly fails to teach or suggest the features of "laminating a plurality of ceramic sheets such that the first land in one of the plurality of ceramic sheets is directly and electrically connected to the second land in another of the plurality of ceramic sheets through the via hole formed in the one of the plurality of ceramic sheets to obtain a laminate," wherein "the area of the second land is greater than the area of the first land" as recited in Applicant's Claim 14.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that Sakai, Murai et al., and Alcoe, applied alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the unique combination and arrangement of features recited in Applicant's Claim 14.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakai in view of Alcoe.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 14 is allowable. Claims 15-20 depend upon Claim 14, and are therefore

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allowable for at least the reasons that Claim 14 is allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are solicited.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1353.

Respectfully submitted,

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/Christopher A. Bennett #46,710/
Attorneys for Applicant

Joseph R. Keating
Registration No. 37,368

KEATING & BENNETT, LLP
1800 Alexander Bell Drive, Suite 200
Reston, VA 20191
Telephone: (571) 313-7440
Facsimile: (571) 313-7421

Christopher A. Bennett
Registration No. 46,710